

# Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park



Newsletter 3, October 2004



Dear Friends,

It is an important time in the planning process for the community to influence the future direction for this National Historical Park. I encourage our residents and business community to examine the alternatives presented in this newsletter, participate in public meetings that will be arranged later this year, and share your thoughts and ideas with the National Park Service. On the basis of the public's review and comments, the alternatives will be refined, and then a recommendation(s) will be presented to Richmond's City Council.

Establishing a National Historical Park in our community is a unique opportunity for the nation to learn about the monumental role that Richmond played in America's World War II Home Front and in the success of winning the war. Richmond's World War II stories, along with the integrity of our historic sites and structures, are what attracted this national recognition from the United States Congress and the President. To be successful, the Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park will require the interest, energy, and support of our community. Please join me in participating in the process to consider and refine the future vision for the Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park.

The partnership of the city of Richmond and the National Park Service is now at one of the most critical steps in planning for Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park. After a year filled with public meetings, workshops, and discussions with many community groups, the National Park Service is presenting, in this newsletter, four very different alternative visions for the proposed National Historical Park for your review and input.

The City of Richmond is proud to share our heritage with the nation. Share your ideas today.



Sincerely,

Irma L. Anderson, Mayor  
City of Richmond, California

Dear Friends,

This is an exciting opportunity to help shape the future of Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park in Richmond, California. Throughout this last year, a growing partnership with the City of Richmond, Contra Costa County, SS *Red Oak Victory*, Richmond Museum of History, Rosie the Riveter Trust, and other community groups and organizations has continued to evolve and strengthen. Each partner brings new opportunities that help shape the visions of a National Historical Park. In addition to these partners, many other Richmond and Bay Area individuals and community groups have shared their ideas and expertise. The National Park Service planners have pulled together all the ideas and suggestions to assemble the foundation for the alternative visions as presented in this newsletter.

Now we are at one of the most important steps, and we need your help to refine these alternative visions, which will then lead to selecting a final vision for establishing the future Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park. As a reviewer, you might like one particular alternative or some combination of the alternatives. Perhaps you will have a new idea that isn't presented in any of the alternatives. Just tell us; we encourage your review.

Enclosed in this newsletter is a comment form to submit your thoughts and ideas. We also welcome e-mail suggestions at [rori\\_gmp@nps.gov](mailto:rori_gmp@nps.gov), as well as letters, which can be sent to the following address:

Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park,  
General Management Plan, 1401 Marina Way South, Richmond, CA 94804.

Later this year, the National Park Service will host public meetings in Richmond and throughout the Bay Area to discuss these alternatives. I hope you will be able to attend a meeting and participate in the discussions. I appreciate your time and interest in helping to establish the Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park. The mission of preserving Richmond's World War II historic sites and structures, along with the stories they represent, has a national significance that is relevant to each of us.



Sincerely,

Judy Hart, Superintendent  
Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front  
National Historical Park



## Visitor Center ribbon cutting ceremony at Richmond's City Hall South.

From left: Nancy Alexander, Daughters of the American Revolution; John Gioia, Contra Costa County Supervisor; Irma Anderson, Mayor; Levern Bryant, assistant city manager; Judy Hart, Superintendent, National Park Service; Congressman George Miller; Gary Bell, City Councilmember; Tom Butt, Board Member, Rosie the Riveter Trust; Mindell Penn, Board Member, Rosie the Riveter Trust; Rosemary Corbin, Board Member, Rosie the Riveter Trust; and Maria Viramontes, City Councilmember.

Not shown: Loni Hancock, Assemblywoman; Charles Belcher, Richmond City councilman; George Turnbull, Deputy Regional Director, National Park Service; Diane Hedler, Board Member, Rosie the Riveter Trust; and, Michele Moss, representative for Congresswoman Barbara Boxer.



Significant Sites in Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park

★ **Atchison Village Defense Housing Project**

Richmond Housing Authority was the first authority in the nation to manage a defense housing project.

It was the largest federally funded American World War II-era housing program totaling 20 projects with more than 23,000 units.

Atchison Village, which was constructed in 1941 as Richmond's first public defense housing project, was built to higher standards than most of the later housing projects.

Funded by the Lanham Act of 1940 (which funded construction of some 625,000 housing units for war workers nationwide), it is the only Lanham Act project that remains in Richmond and one of the few in the nation that were not removed after the war.

★ **Bay Trail/Esplanade**

With 20 miles of Bay Trail now in place, Richmond stands out as having more Bay Trail than any other city on this planned 500-mile hiking and biking route encircling the San Francisco Bay Area.

★ **Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant**

The plant, constructed in 1931, is an outstanding example of 20th century industrial architecture. It was designed by internationally famous architect Albert Kahn.

By July 1942 it was designated the “ Richmond Tank Depot,” one of only three such depots in the entire United States. Every tank and combat vehicle used in World War II went through one of these three tank depots. This plant assembled 49,000 jeeps and prepared over 90,000 tanks and other combat vehicles for shipment overseas.

★ **SS Red Oak Victory**

This cargo vessel was built in Richmond Kaiser Shipyard No. 1, launched on November 9, 1944, and commissioned as the SS *Red Oak Victory*. It was one of 414 Victory ships constructed during World War II across the country.

The ship was named for the town of Red Oak, Iowa, which suffered the highest per capita casualty rate of any American community during the war.

★ **Maritime and Ruth C. Powers Child Development Centers**

The centers, funded by the U.S. Maritime Commission and operated by the Richmond School District, were staffed with nutritionists, psychiatrists, and certified teachers and incorporated progressive educational programming. They also provided well-balanced hot meals and health care and offered optional family counseling.

Kaiser's innovative child care program, developed by child welfare experts from the University of California, Berkeley, was designed to teach children how to "eat, sleep and play" and to "instill proper habits."

The Maritime Child Development Center opened on June 1, 1943, with a capacity of 180 children.

The Pullman Child Development Center (since renamed the Ruth C. Powers) was constructed sometime after September 1943.

At its peak, with 24,500 women on the Kaiser payroll, Richmond's citywide child development program maintained a total daily attendance of 1,400 children.

★ **Richmond Field Hospital (Kaiser Hospital)**

This hospital, financed by U.S. Maritime Commission, opened on August 10, 1942, with only 10 beds. Additions increased its capacity to 160 beds by 1944.

This field hospital, sponsored by Kaiser's Permanente Foundation, served as the mid-level component of a three-tier medical care system, which also included six well-equipped first-aid stations at the individual shipyards and the main Permanente Hospital in Oakland.

★ **Rosie the Riveter Memorial / Rosie the Riveter Park**

The memorial, dedicated on October 14, 2000, is a sculpture that symbolizes the framework of a Liberty ship. Photographs and text panels incorporated into the sculpture give an overview of the history of the "Home Front. Quotes from "Rosies" and a World War II timeline are incised into the granite walkway of the memorial.

★ **Richmond Shipyard No. 3**

Built in 1942, this was one of four Kaiser shipyards in Richmond. It is the only yard still intact.

This yard was associated with advances in the design and engineering of shipyards and the shipbuilding process during World War II. Mass production techniques, prefabrication, the straight flow of parts and materials, segmenting of job tasks, and the training of unskilled laborers sped production. The time-consuming task of riveting steel plates was replaced by welding.

★ **Barbara and Jay Vincent Park**

This park sits on a breakwater in front of Marina Bay that was originally constructed for Kaiser Richmond Shipyard No. 2. It is home to a Liberty Ship monument that interprets World War II experiences of shipyard workers.

★ **Shimada Peace (Friendship) Memorial Park**

Commemorates friendship between the City of Richmond and its sister city, Shimada in Japan.

★ **Richmond Fire Station 67**

The City of Richmond built this fire station to serve the Kaiser shipyards during World War II.

PLANNING TIMELINE			
Step	Timeframe	Planning Activity	What You Can Do
1	Summer 2002 – Winter 2003	<b>Project Startup.</b> Assemble planning team and design planning process. Build a partnership with other interested government agencies and community groups. Begin collecting information to guide decision-making.	Attend public meetings. Review newsletter 1 and submit your thoughts to the planning team. Sign up on the park mailing list.
2	Spring 2003 – Fall 2003	<b>Identify the Planning Context.</b> Develop purpose, significance, and primary interpretive themes for the park. Identify issues, concerns, and opportunities that the plan will address.	Review newsletter 2 and submit your thoughts to the planning team.
3	Winter 2004 – Winter 2005  <b>WE ARE HERE</b>	<b>Develop Alternatives.</b> Develop a range of alternative visions. Present and discuss alternatives with the public. Analyze public feedback and make revisions. Work with our partners to evaluate alternatives and build a future vision.	Review newsletter 3 and submit your thoughts to the planning team. Participate in a public meeting to discuss the alternatives.
4	Winter 2005 – Fall 2005	<b>Prepare and Publish <i>Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement</i>.</b> Distribute draft document for public review.	Review Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement and submit your comments to the planning team.
5	Fall 2005 – Spring 2006	<b>Revise and Publish <i>Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement</i>.</b> Make appropriate changes to the draft document based on public comments, environmental analysis, and other relevant information. Distribute final document.	Review Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement.
6	Summer 2006	<b>Publish Record of Decision.</b> The final alternative, mitigating measures, and the decision rationale will be documented and printed in the Federal Register and local newspaper.	
7	Summer 2006 and beyond	<b>Implement the Plan.</b> After a record of decision is issued, the management directions in the plan will be carried out as funding allows.	

Purpose and Significance

Purpose and significance statements provide an understanding of the intent of Congress in establishing Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park. All our planning efforts are measured against the park’s purpose and significance as a guide in developing and evaluating alternative visions.

Purpose

The purpose of Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park is to preserve, for the benefit and inspiration of the people of the United States as a National Historical Park, the stories, sites, structures, and areas in Richmond, California that are associated with the citizen, industrial, and governmental efforts that contributed to victory in World War II and to lasting change to America.

Significance

Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park is significant for the following reasons:

- ★ The National Historical Park has the nation’s largest concentration of intact World War II historic structures and sites. These are interwoven with the City of Richmond's 1940s-era historic setting, which illustrates a broad spectrum of home front stories.
- ★ The National Historical Park is the National Park Service’s collection center and coordinator for World War II home front oral histories and objects that are publicly accessible on-site and on the internet.



# Preliminary Alternative Visions

Developing a vision for the future of Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park is the primary role of the general management plan. In this newsletter, we present four alternative visions for your consideration and comment. These alternatives were built from ideas that were expressed at public meetings and workshops and from discussions with our participating partners, community groups, and leaders. These different visions are called alternatives. Evaluating alternatives enables us to compare and contrast the advantages of one course of action over another. The planning team is now at a stage where we need your review and comments to help guide the future of Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park.

Following your review of these alternative visions, the planning team will analyze the public feedback, make revisions, and continue our discussions with the City of Richmond, Contra Costa County, *Red Oak Victory*, Richmond Museum of History, and other community partners. On the basis of the discussions and analysis, the decision-makers will select the alternative that offers the best advantages. This alternative, called the “preferred alternative,” may be very similar to one of the preliminary alternatives, may combine elements of more than one alternative, or may introduce entirely new ideas. All the alternatives and analysis will be packaged into a draft general management plan, which you can provide input about the vision that is emerging. The chart on page 2 outlines the timeline of the planning steps.

Please take the time to review and submit your thoughts and ideas on the enclosed comment card, or email the planning team at *rori\_gmp@nps.gov*, or send a letter to the following address:

Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park  
General Management Plan  
1401 Marina Way South  
Richmond, CA 94804.

We look forward to hearing from you.

# Elements Common to All Alternatives

This newsletter presents four very different visions for the future of Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park. However, some elements would be consistent throughout all the alternatives. The following list highlights the elements that are incorporated into all the alternatives.

- ★ To learn about the significance of the National Historical Park and the World War II Home Front, the World War II Home Front Education Center would offer learning through the Internet with educational exhibits and linkages to other representative sites across the country.
- ★ The park would interpret and preserve the oral histories, memorabilia, and stories of Rosie the Riveter and the American World War II Home Front.
- ★ The park would maintain a registry as part of recognition of the millions of Rosies and other Home Front participants.
- ★ The National Park Service would offer technical assistance to preserve historic properties that support the themes of Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park.
- ★ The preservation of the exterior of historic structures that were identified in the legislation would be encouraged.
- ★ Port operations at the Port of Richmond would continue.
- ★ Facilities and services would be encouraged that would attract recreational boaters, as well as other park visitors.
- ★ The park might support interpretation or provide interpretation at all sites in the park related to the World War II Home Front.
- ★ The San Francisco Bay Trail would continue to offer areas for walking, running and bicycling along the waterfront portions of the park.
- ★ Visitors could view the historic structures of Richmond Shipyard No. 3 from the Bay Trail, and Seacliff Road, which ends at the western boundary of the shipyard.



Maritime Child Development Center



The Rosie the Riveter Memorial



Historic Kaiser Field Hospital

## Alternative A Vision

*Alternative A is the no-action alternative, which would continue the current management and trends at Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park. This alternative provides a baseline for comparison in evaluating the changes and impacts of the other alternatives.*

### Key Distinguishing Points

#### Visitor Experience

Visitors would have the opportunity to explore Richmond's World War II Home Front historic sites and structures by viewing the exhibits and archives of the nonprofit Richmond Museum of History, visiting the National Park Service visitor center at Richmond City Hall, touring the victory ship *SS Red Oak Victory* and visiting the Rosie the Riveter Memorial.

#### Education and Visitor Services

The National Park Service visitor center, a self-guided facility at the Richmond City Hall, would offer interpretive exhibits. It is expected that the *SS Red Oak Victory* would be moored at Sheridan Observation Point and that the Richmond Museum of History would be in a location that is not in the National Historical Park.

#### Historic Preservation

The preservation of the exterior facades of

structures that are designated part of the park would be encouraged. Such structures include the Maritime and Powers child development centers, Kaiser Hospital, and war workers housing.

#### SS Red Oak Victory

The *SS Red Oak Victory* could be moored at Sheridan Observation Point.

#### Park Headquarters

The park administrative headquarters would be in the Richmond City Hall.

#### Visitor Tours and Transportation Services

Self-guided automobile tours of historic sites throughout Richmond would be available.

#### Richmond Shipyard No. 3

The entire area of Richmond Shipyard No. 3 would be used for port purposes. Visitors could view the historic part of the shipyard from offsite locations along Seacliff Road or from East Bay Regional Park lands above the shipyard.

### A visitor day at the park

See “Exploring the Park” section in the map insert sheet.



Visitor Center Celebration



# Alternative B

## Vision

*Alternative B would involve preserving and fully interpreting the nation's most intact collection of World War II American Home Front sites and structures. Visitors and residents would have the opportunity to experience a comprehensive exploration of World War II Home Front stories by visiting the historic sites and structures.*

## Key Distinguishing Points

### Visitor Experience

Visitors would have the opportunity to fully explore Richmond’s World War II Home Front historic sites and structures, which would allow them to learn about the Home Front stories within the setting and sounds of 1940s Richmond.

### Education and Visitor Services

The National Park Service Education Center and primary visitor services would be based in the Ford Assembly Plant building, offering orientation and interpretive exhibits. Interpretive exhibits also would be available at most park sites and structures. A visitor information station in downtown Richmond would orient visitors to the park, and there also would be visitor information at the entrance to Shipyard No. 3.

### Historic Preservation

The exterior facades of historic structures would be maintained so that World War II stories could be interpreted. Portions of the interior spaces could be preserved to a World War II-era appearance; these also could be used for interpretation. Interior spaces not used for park purposes could be used for compatible contemporary uses.

### SS *Red Oak Victory*

The SS *Red Oak Victory* could be moored in a graving basin in Shipyard No. 3.

### Child Development Centers

The Maritime Child Development Center would be preserved, and parts of the interior would be fully restored and furnished with the existing historic furniture and toys in the structure. The rest of the structure would continue with its historic use, providing early childhood education and care.

The Ruth Powers Child Development Center would be preserved and used to continue its historic use for child care and education. This center could be a resource center for the best practices in early child care.

### Park Headquarters

The park administrative headquarters could be placed in the Ford Assembly Plant building.

### Visitor Tours and Transportation Services

The park would be connected to the Richmond Intermodal Transportation Station by either local transit service or a land-based shuttle provided by the park. Visitors could gain access to the entire park by land-based park shuttles or by self-guiding automobile tours.

Private licensed guides could offer guided tours to historic sites.

Access through the Port of Richmond Shipyard No. 3 to the designated historic shipyard could be provided by a park shuttle service. Water taxis could offer visitor access between the Ford Assembly Plant building and Richmond Shipyard No. 3.

### Richmond Shipyard No. 3

Most of Richmond Shipyard No. 3 and its historic structures would be used for contemporary port uses. Part of the interior of each historic shipyard structure would be preserved and interpreted. The exteriors of these historic structures would be preserved to reflect their appearance during the 1940s.

Three of the five graving basins would be preserved for park purposes: to moor the SS *Red Oak Victory*, to provide water taxi access and temporary boater’s tie-ups, and to house a partially constructed model of a Victory ship.

Guided tours for visitors could be offered to part of the historic Richmond Shipyard No. 3.

## A visitor day at the park

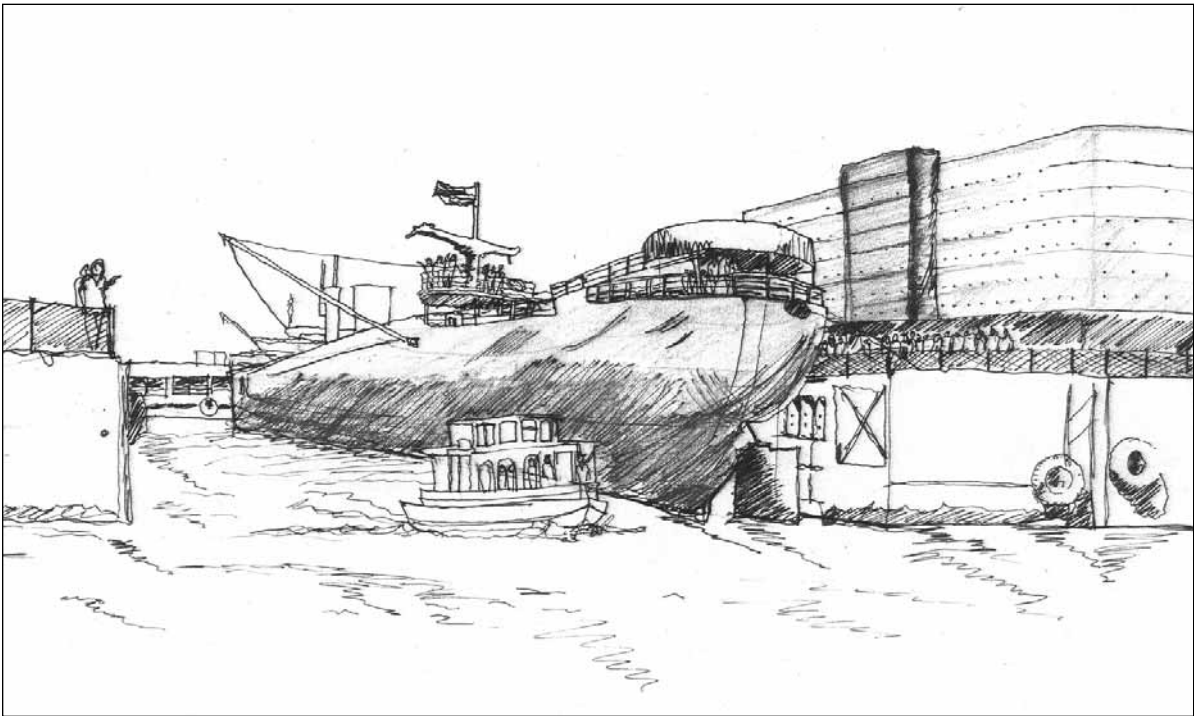
Visitors begin their trip at the National Park Service education center located in the Ford Assembly Plant building. The education center's films and exhibits introduce visitors to the history and themes of Richmond’s World War II Home Front and help them plan their park experience.

At the adjacent Sheridan Point Observation Park visitors can board a water taxi for a boat ride to Shipyard No. 3. Boating in Richmond harbor features views of San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge. As the water taxi crosses the Santa Fe Channel, visitors are treated to views of the enormous structures of the historic shipyard and the modern day cargo ships at the working port. This boat ride will also provide a unique up-close experience of the working port. The water taxi then turns into one of the huge graving docks along side the SS *Red Oak Victory*. This World War II Victory ship was one of 747 ships constructed in Kaiser's Richmond shipyards during World War II, of which 142 were Victory ships.

After landing, visitors can join a guided tour to learn how victory ships were assembled, then dress in the safety equipment worn by shipbuilders and enjoy a welding and riveting demonstration. Portions of the historic sites and buildings are open for visitors to explore and view exhibits relating to World War II. A climb to the top of the General Warehouse provides panoramic views of San Francisco Bay and the vastness of the historic shipyard.

The National Historical Park experience continues into the City of Richmond to explore the World War II community infrastructure needed to support the war industry and ship building efforts. At the National Park Service visitor information station in downtown Richmond, visitors could choose to participate in ranger-led talks, join a guided tour or enjoy self-guided exploration of the historic Richmond Home Front community. At each historic site a visitor is provided with interpretive signs and exhibits, ranger-led programs, and an opportunity to learn about 1940’s Richmond.

While visiting Richmond's historic sites, there are many local visitor attractions and services to enjoy. Visitors can also relax at one of the numerous open spaces or taking a waterfront stroll along the Bay Trail are additional park attractions.



Artist's concept of the SS *Red Oak Victory* ship in Shipyard No. 3 graving basin



Artist's concept of the downtown information center